

Comment Letter AL031**AL031**

53009 ALVARADO-NILES ROAD
UNION CITY, CALIFORNIA 94587
(510) 471-3232

August 10, 2004

Attn: California High-Speed Train
California High Speed Rail Authority
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

To Whom It May Concern:

In review of the *Draft Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System* we have noted that the Altamont Pass alternative alignment for the Northern Mountain Crossing, Bay Area to Merced Region was not studied in the Draft Program EIR/EIS. The City of Union City is requesting that the California High Speed Rail Authority study this alternative at the same level of detail as the Pacheco Pass and the Panoche Pass. This information should be included in the draft Program EIR/EIS.

It appears that the Altamont Pass alternative would provide better service to regional markets and generate more ridership between Sacramento, the Central Valley and the Bay Area. The train would travel through the more highly populated areas, rather than through open, undeveloped lands to the south. The Rail Authority's analysis states that the travel time between Los Angeles and San Jose would be 10 minutes longer for an express train using the Altamont Pass alternative route. This additional travel time seems a reasonable tradeoff when considering benefits to the region in providing service and potentially increasing ridership. Lastly, the Rail Authority's analysis indicates that the Altamont alternative is estimated to have lower capital and operating costs than the other two alternatives.

Based upon the factors of lower construction and operating costs and benefit to the existing Northern California population centers, a complete analysis of the Altamont Pass alternative is warranted. The City of Union City urges the Rail Authority to consider this option and fully integrate it into the EIR/EIS analysis as a viable alternative.

Union City is very supportive of high-speed rail service. We remain committed to promote the extension of various forms of heavy rail throughout the Bay Area and the State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joan Malloy".

Joan Malloy
Planning Manager

Cc: City Manager
City Council



AL031-1

Response to Comments of Joan Malloy, Planning Manager, City of Union City, August 11, 2004 (Letter AL031)

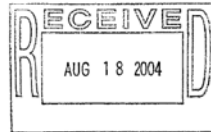
AL031-1

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

Comment Letter AL032



AL032

Larry Greene
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL OFFICER

August 12, 2004

California High-Speed train EIR/ EIS Comments
925 L Street Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814-1908

FAX# (916) 322-0827

**SUBJECT: Draft Program EIR and EIS: California High-Speed Train
SMAQMD # 200400083**

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for providing the Draft Program EIR and EIS for the California High-Speed Train Project to the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (Sacramento District) for our review. We appreciate the opportunity to review this project which crosses our jurisdictional lines and is proposed to cover over 700 miles through the state of California. Our review is typically limited to projects located in the county of Sacramento, but given that the proposed train will have impacts in geographical areas which contribute to the overall transport of air pollution into Sacramento County, we are also interested in the train's effects in the Bay Area and the San Joaquin Valley as well.

The county of Sacramento is part of the Sacramento federal ozone nonattainment area, that has been designated by the USEPA as being in "serious" nonattainment for the federal eight-hour ozone standard. The San Joaquin area has been designated as being in "serious" nonattainment and the San Francisco Bay Area has been classified as being in "marginal" nonattainment status. Air pollutants can be transported from one area to another through the action of wind and other meteorological forces. Studies indicate that precursor pollutants generated by Bay Area traffic and industrial sources and pollution formed in the San Joaquin Valley may end up in the Sacramento region under certain meteorological conditions.

We support the concept of an electrified train connecting major urbanized areas in California as it could provide a transportation solution which would produce a net reduction of mobile source emissions from vehicle trips. We do have concerns about the project, however, as listed below:

1. Short term construction impacts of the high speed rail project.

Construction equipment contributes significantly to air pollution whether it be NO_x, ROG (precursors of ground level ozone) or Particulate Matter. We recommend that future environmental documents on the project should contain an analysis of those impacts for each of the affected Air Districts.

777 12th Street, 3rd Floor ■ Sacramento, CA 95814-1908
916/874-4800 ■ 916/874-4899 fax
www.airquality.org

-2- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

The documents should contain a commitment to utilize appropriate construction mitigation measures during construction and implementation of the project. The most advanced techniques and cleanest equipment should be utilized so that the Sacramento federal ozone nonattainment area is able to achieve state and federal standards for pollutants.

AL032-1
cont.

2. Dismissal of the Altamont Pass corridor alternative at this level may not be appropriate.

The Altamont corridor would provide significantly shorter travel times for Sacramento passengers bound for San Francisco or San Jose. In addition, the costs to construct would be less with the Altamont corridor than with the Diablo or Pacheco corridors. It's our understanding that many municipalities and jurisdictions have lobbied for the Altamont corridor. With the countervailing forces for and against the three corridors, we believe the EIR and EIS should analyze all three of the corridors more comprehensively before dismissing any of them. This analysis is necessary to achieve CEQA's objective of "fostering meaningful public participation and informed decision making." (CEQA Guidelines, Sec. 15126.6, subd. (f)). We strongly recommend that the environmental documents include the Altamont Pass alternative.

AL032-2

3. The location of the Sacramento station.

We believe the High-Speed Train should come into the Sacramento Intermodal Transportation Facility (SITF) which will be located near the current Amtrak station in downtown Sacramento rather than at the Power Inn location. This Intermodal Facility will house bus, light rail, heavy rail and automobile connections. It will also be in a dense, urban area which can support transit. We believe vehicle trips to the train would be reduced if it were at the SITF; the public would be encouraged to get in the habit of alternative transportation options if all those options were clustered in one location. If the train ended at the Power Inn Station, we believe more riders would end up driving to the facility and the opportunity to encourage inter-modality would be diminished. We also believe that connectivity to the Capitol Corridor train would be enhanced by this location.

AL032-3

4. Consideration of a lower demand alternative.

On page 2-7, the document states that demand for high-speed train ridership could be 42-68 million riders/year. Analysis is then performed based on the top end of this range (pg 3.17-3). The Modal Alternative was then developed to meet the top end of this range. To provide a full range of alternatives, the EIR should evaluate an alternative that also meets the lower end of the demand range.

AL032-4

AL032-1

Comment Letter AL032 Continued

- 3- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

5. Recommendation for discussion of more subtle aspects of HST.

In conjunction with the discussion of forecasted demand, we also believe that subsequent documents will need to delineate more subtle aspects of the HST alternative. If the HST is going to compete with modal alternatives (cars, trains, planes), then certain service characteristics would need to be ensured. Things such as train and station amenities, baggage handling, security, and trip planning all need to be assured. If more riders find the HST attractive, the HST will have more air quality benefits.

AL032-5

6. Electrical power generation for the use of the train.

The issue of electrical power generation for the use of the train is discussed on Page 3.3-26. It is stated that "it is not yet clear which facilities would be supplying power to the proposed HST system." In subsequent documents, perhaps, the source and type of power can be identified and analyzed for local impacts.

AL032-6

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this Draft Program EIR and EIS for the California High-Speed Train Project. We hope you find our comments helpful as you prepare the final EIR and EIS. If you have questions about any of our comments or concerns, please contact me at 874-4802.

Sincerely,



Larry Greene
Air Pollution Control Officer

Response to Comments of Larry Greene, Air Pollution Control Officer, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, August 18, 2004 (Letter AL032)

AL032-1

Acknowledged. Air quality related construction impacts would be addressed in more detail during subsequent project-level environmental reviews. Regarding general construction impacts, please see Section 3.18.

AL032-2

Please see standard response 2.18.1.

AL032-3

Acknowledged. The Authority has identified the downtown Sacramento Station site as the preferred HST station location to serve the Sacramento area.

AL032-4

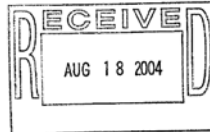
Acknowledged. The rationale for the development of the Alternatives is described in Section 2.3.2 of the Draft Program EIR/EIS. It was determined that using the "high-end" HST forecasts (which would have greater potential for environmental impacts) was appropriate for a program EIR/EIS process and these numbers should be used for both the HST and Modal Alternatives in order to make consistent and appropriate comparisons.

AL032-5

Acknowledged. Things such as train and station amenities, baggage handling, and trip planning are part of any rail system, but are at a level of detail beyond the scope of this program level EIR/EIS. Should the HST proposal move forward, more detail information concerning these services and amenities will be provided in future project specific studies. In regards to security, please see standard response 2.8.1.

AL032-6

The electrical power for the proposed HST system would be obtained from the electric transmission grid, which receives power from numerous sources. Thus, the sources providing power to the grid from which the HST would receive power would vary with market conditions from day to day. The proportion of sources typical of the California grid was used for the air quality analysis. See Section 3.3.1 of the Final Program EIR/EIS.

Comment Letter AL033**AL033**

August 11, 2004

Attn: California High-Speed Train
Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Draft Program EIR/EIS Comments

Thank you for the opportunity to hear the details of the High-Speed Rail plans at the August 10 Visalia presentation. As the Economic Development Corporation serving Tulare County and its eight incorporated cities we are interested in seeing the selection of the UPRR High-Speed Rail route through the San Joaquin Valley. We also encourage the location of a station near the Visalia airport, at the intersection of two major freeways, Highway 198 and Highway 99.

When compared to the BNSF alternative, this route serves a larger number of population centers in the Valley, resulting in increased ridership. It also is a better location for connection to local transportation alternatives such as commercial air service and bus connections to the National Parks. In addition, the route is shorter, reducing the line haul time, something critical to encourage the largest number of riders.

The High-Speed Rail is an important economic development enhancement for the San Joaquin Valley. We encourage your future support of the program and offer our local support as well. Thank you for taking these comments into consideration as you finalize the initial High-Speed Rail EIR/EIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Saldana".

Paul Saldana, President/CEO

cc: EDC Board of Directors
Tulare County Board of Supervisors
Tulare County City Managers

An Accredited Economic Development Organization

4500 S. Laspina St., Tulare, CA 93274 Tel., 559/688-3388 Fax, 559/688-1406 www.edctulare.com

The People to Grow Your Business

CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



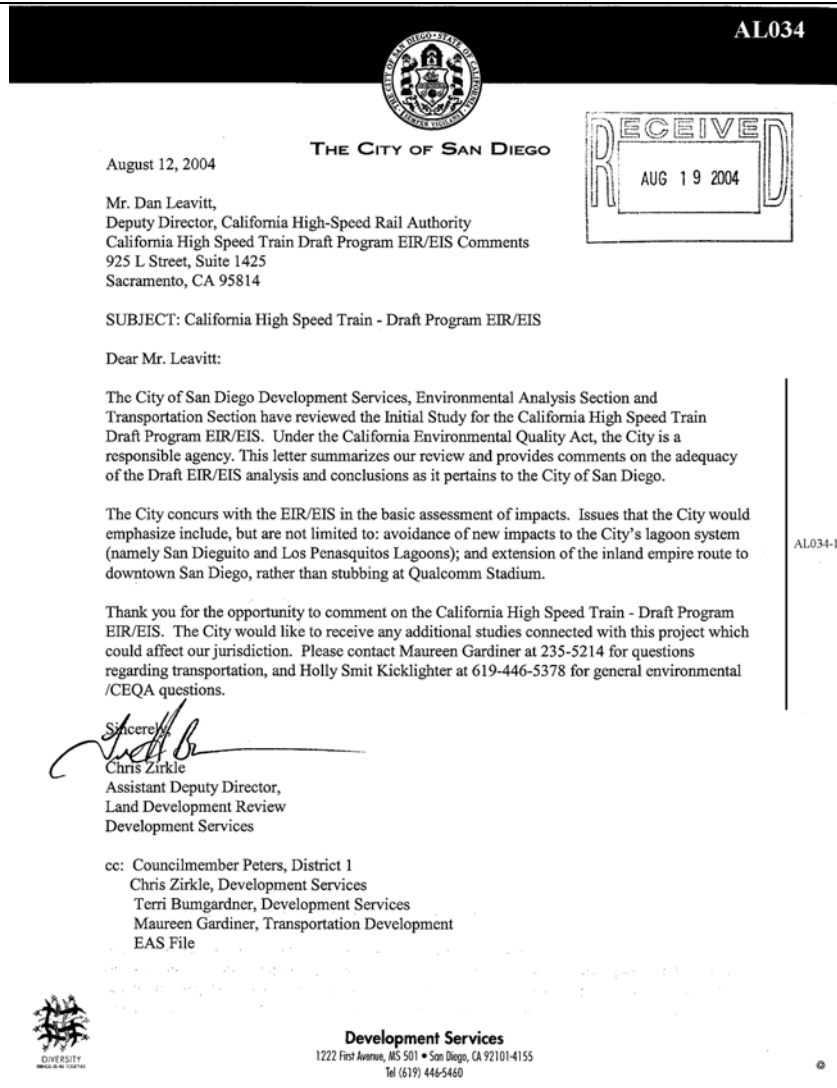
U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Railroad
Administration**

Response to Comments of Paul Saldana, President/CEO, Tulare County Economic Development Corporation, August 18, 2004 (Letter AL033)

AL033-1

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.15.4.

Comment Letter AL034



Response to Comments of Chris Zirkle, Assistant Deputy Director, City of San Diego, Land Development Review, Development Services, August 19, 2004 (Letter AL034)

AL034-1

Acknowledged. The Authority has identified a preferred HST alignment that directly serves downtown San Diego via the I-15 and Carroll Canyon or Miramar alignment options. Please see standard response 6.42.1 in regards to conventional rail improvements along the LOSSAN (coastal) corridor.

Comment Letter AL035

AL035

City of
Encinitas

August 19, 2004

Mr. Mehdi Morshed
Executive Director
California High Speed Rail Authority
925 L Street, Suite 1425
Sacramento, CA 95814

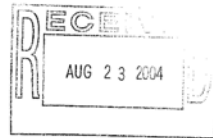
Re: Comments on Draft Program EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System

Dear Mr. Morshed:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the California High-Speed Rail Authority's draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). The City is very appreciative of the outreach efforts conducted by the California High Speed Authority (Authority), and especially the Authority's outreach efforts to local communities through direct contact and holding public workshops. The City of Encinitas was pleased to host a site for an Authority and Caltrans Department of Rail sponsored public forum held on April 19, 2004. The City and its representative have also participated in various forums held in San Diego County during the project scoping period.

It is our understanding that for the proposed Los Angeles to San Diego segment, the Authority is evaluating two routes: a) an Inland Corridor route via East San Gabriel Valley, Riverside, Temecula and San Diego; and b) a coastal route along the Los Angeles to San Diego (LOSSAN) corridor, utilizing conventional non-electric train technology. The City of Encinitas is located in northern San Diego County coastal area and portions of the LOSSAN corridor traverse through the city for approximately 6.1 miles. The corridor is adjacent to the Pacific coastline, historic Coast Highway 101, business and residential districts, and crosses the San Elijo Lagoon. Comments in this correspondence are regarding the LOSSAN coastal corridor segment with emphasis on the Encinitas area.

The City has been an advocate for comprehensive planning of the rail corridor for some time. In 2000, the City undertook efforts to evaluate the Encinitas rail corridor through community workshops, public forums and hearings. The processes culminated in the City Council adopting a below grade trench and cover option as the preferred solution for the Encinitas rail corridor. We are pleased that the "trench and cover" option for portions of the Encinitas area is under consideration as an alternative by the Authority. The need



for grade-separated crossing at existing at-grade intersections and the necessity of creating grade-separated pedestrian crossings are essential to assure public safety and adequate traffic and pedestrian circulation.

As an update to projects currently being conducted along the Encinitas segment of the LOSSAN rail corridor, there are three (3) projects in various stages.

- 1) **Leucadia Boulevard Grade Separation Study – LOSSAN Milepost 236.50:**
The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) in cooperation with the City is undertaking a Leucadia Boulevard Grade Separation Study to evaluate methods for grade separating Leucadia Boulevard from the rail tracks. The study began in April 2004 and is anticipated to culminate with a project study report in January or February 2005. The study will define the preferred alternative(s) for grade separation of the Leucadia intersection and conduct preliminary engineering analysis. The Authority should note that two of the alternatives under evaluation involve lowering the rail line to pass under Leucadia Boulevard.
- 2) **Encinitas Grade Separated Pedestrian Crossings**
SANDAG and the City have initiated a project to conduct design and preliminary engineering phases for three (3) grade separated pedestrian crossings along the Encinitas rail corridor. The areas designated as having the greatest need for grade separated pedestrian crossings are in the vicinity of El Portal Street (milepost 237.1) Sante Fe Drive (milepost 239.5) and Montgomery Avenue (milepost 239.5). The project is anticipated to begin in November 2004 and last 24 months.
- 3) **Encinitas Rail Trail Segment**
The City is currently in the engineering and design phase for the Coastal Rail Trail segment to be constructed primarily along portions of the railroad right-of-way. The Rail Trail is multi-use, non-motorized trails from San Diego to Oceanside.

Comments specific to the Draft Program EIR/EIS:

Traffic and Circulation, Section 3.1.4 E, page 3.1-23 (second to last sentence)
The low-build option discusses improvements to existing grade crossings and states, "...and a new grade separation at Chesterfield Drive in Encinitas." There already exists an at-grade crossing at Chesterfield Drive (LOSSAN mile marker 239.8). The LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan (October 2003) developed by Caltrans and the Federal Rail Administration indicates that an At-Grade with Grade Separations options would include; "...double tracking throughout Encinitas with new grade separations at Leucadia Blvd. at Coast Highway 101/Vulcan Avenue, and *Birmingham Drive* at San Elijo" (p.38). The draft EIR/EIS should be consistent with the LOSSAN Corridor Strategic Plan regarding potential "new" grade separations.

Appendix 3.1-B

Arterials proposed for Grade Separation in LOSSAN should note Birmingham Drive (see discussion above).

AL035-1
cont.

Comment Letter AL035 Continued

Land Use and Planning, Communities and Neighborhoods, Property and Environmental Justice Section 3.7). The City strongly concurs with the draft EIR/EIS statement of: "Potential mitigation strategies to reduce the effects of any new barriers would be considered at the project level environmental review and could include grade separating planned rail lines and streets, new pedestrian crossings new cross connection points, improved visual quality of project facilities, and traffic management plans to maintain access during and after construction." (page 3.7.5 B., page 3.7-27).

Aesthetics and Visual Resources 3.9.1C

Los Angeles to San Diego via Orange County

North and South Coast Highway 101 in Encinitas, Camino Del Mar in Del Mar, Carlsbad Boulevard in Carlsbad, and Coast Highway 101 in Oceanside (County Road S21) runs to the west of, and parallels many sections along the LOSSAN rail corridor. The highway is a County-designated scenic roadway and a state-designated historic roadway (ACR 92 (Morrow/Craven) attached). This designation should be noted in the Aesthetics and Visual Resources section of the document.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft EIR/EIS for the Proposed California High-Speed Train System. The City appreciates the work conducted by the Authority and its partner agencies.

Sincerely,



Richard Phillips
Assistant to the City Manager

Attachments

C: City Council
City of Encinitas Planning/Building Department
City of Encinitas Traffic Engineering Division
Dan Leavitt, Cal. HS Rail
SANDAG

ACR 92 Assembly Concurrent Resolution - CHAPTERED

Page 1 of 2

BILL NUMBER: ACR 92 CHAPTERED
BILL TEXT

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 150
FILED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE SEPTEMBER 1, 1998
ADOPTED IN ASSEMBLY AUGUST 21, 1998
ADOPTED IN SENATE AUGUST 20, 1998
AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 7, 1998
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 9, 1998

INTRODUCED BY Assembly Member Morrow
(Coauthor: Senator Craven)

FEBRUARY 10, 1998

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 92--Relative to historic U.S. Highway Route 101.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 92, Morrow. Historic U.S. Highway Route 101.
This measure would recognize the remaining sections of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 for their historical significance. The measure would request the Department of Transportation, upon application by a local agency or private group to identify any former section of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 that is still a publicly maintained highway and is within the jurisdiction of the department, but is not designated as having formerly been part of the original U.S. Highway Route 101, to designate that section of highway as Historic U.S. Highway Route 101. The measure would request the department to determine the cost of appropriate highway markers or signs showing that special designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources for that cost, to erect appropriate highway markers or signs on those former sections of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 that are part of the state highway system. The measure would also request the department to develop consistent signing standards for the placement of highway markers or signs, identifying sections of the highway, which may be used by cities or counties to designate the historical significance of those portions of the route.

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway Route 101, a 935-mile highway spanning the southern and northern borders of California, has played a major role in the development of this state during the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway Route 101, is one of the earliest state highway routes in California recommended by the Bureau of Highways map of 1896, and was adopted into the state highway system in 1909; and

WHEREAS, In 1912, construction began on U.S. Highway Route 101 as one of two north-south major highways connecting California's counties; and

WHEREAS, In 1925, the federal government became involved in highway route designations across the nation by assigning odd numbers to roadways running north and south. Beginning on the Atlantic coast, the lowest number commenced and increased progressively from the east toward the west until the road along the Pacific Coast received a formal enumeration as U.S. Highway Route 101; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway Route 101, in addition to its importance in

http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/97-98/bill/asm/ab_0051-0100/acr_92_bill_19980901_chaptered.html 8/18/2004

Comment Letter AL035 Continued

ACR 92 Assembly Concurrent Resolution - CHAPTERED

Page 2 of 2

transportation, has outstanding natural, cultural, historic, and scenic qualities; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, U.S. Highway Route 101 has conveyed commerce and pleasure travelers whose needs were met by nearby cities and counties; and

WHEREAS, The response to these needs resulted in the development of adjacent environments or the retention of open spaces and established the unique character of those areas; and

WHEREAS, Though supplanted by another roadway as the state's primary north-south highway, segments of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 remain, although many are no longer identified as such; and

WHEREAS, The original U.S. Highway Route 101 served as the main street of many California cities and towns along its length on the coast and, though no longer designated as former U.S. Highway Route 101, these sections represent both state and local historic significance; and

WHEREAS, Some portions of the highway have been turned over to local governments and are no longer within the state highway system; and

WHEREAS, Without formal designation, the history and contribution of these segments of U.S. Highway Route 101 to the development of the state would remain less known; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that a means to designate these historic sections of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 be established; now, therefore, be it

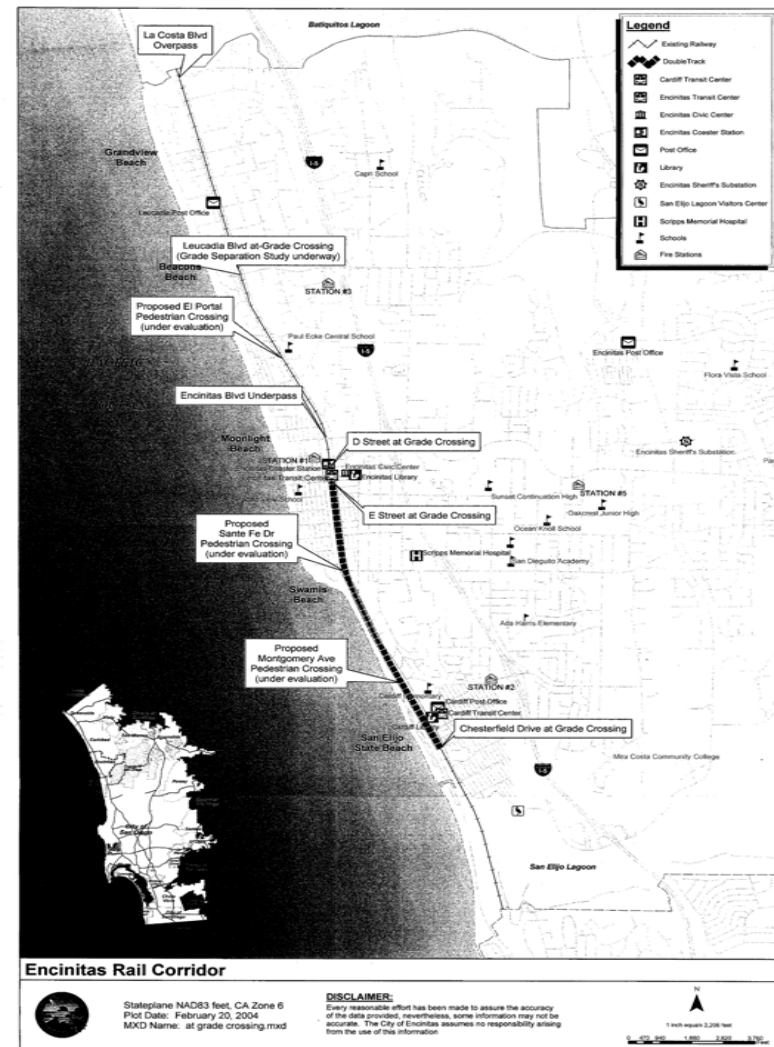
Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the remaining sections of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 for their historical significance and importance in the development of California; and be it further

Resolved, That the Department of Transportation is requested, upon application by a local agency or a private group to identify any former section of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 that is still a publicly maintained highway and is within the jurisdiction of the department, but is not designated as having formerly been part of the original U.S. Highway Route 101, to designate that section of highway as Historic U.S. Highway Route 101; and be it further

Resolved, That the department is requested to determine the cost of appropriate highway markers or signs consistent with signing requirements for the state highway system showing this special Historic U.S. Highway Route 101 designation and, upon receiving donations from nonstate sources for that cost, to erect those highway markers or signs on those former sections of the original U.S. Highway Route 101 that are part of the state highway system; and be it further

Resolved, That the department is requested to develop consistent signing standards for the placement of highway markers or signs, identifying sections of the original U.S. Highway 101, which may be used by cities or counties to designate the historical significance of those portions of the route that are within their respective jurisdictions; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the Director of Transportation and to the author for appropriate distribution.



http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/97-98/bill/asm/ab_0051-0100/acr_92_bill_19980901_chaptered.html 8/18/2004

Response to Comments of Richard Phillips, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Encinitas, August 23, 2004 (Letter AL035)

AL035-1

Acknowledged. Please see standard response 6.42.1.